EUC Agenda Item 14

(Energy Conservation Audit and Disclosure) ECAD ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

Comments of Texas Ratepayers' Organization to Save Energy and

Austin Tenant's Council

By: Carol Biedrzycki

Austin Energy has forwarded to the Electric Utility Commission (EUC) a proposed amendment to the Energy Conservation Audit and Disclosure (ECAD) Ordinance. One of the

amendments would substantially reduce the energy efficiency standard set for high energy use

facilities in the ECAD Ordinance adopted by City Council on September 21, 2009. The current

ordinance's high use energy facility provision targets apartment buildings where tenants can

expect high utility bills. The standard of high energy use facility means that the average energy

use per square foot of the facility is 150% of the average energy use per square foot for multi-

family structures in the Austin Energy service area. Under the current ordinance a high energy

use facility owner has 18 months to reduce energy use to within 110% of average per square foot

usage of multi-family facilities. According to Austin Energy staff, 52 out of 1,400 apartment

complexes are over 150 percent of average per square foot energy usage of all multi-family

facilities within the City.

The proposed amendment to the ECAD ordinance referred to as §6-7-23 would only

require the owner to reduce the average per square foot energy usage by 20% which is much

lower than the existing 110% standard. Further, under the amendment, replacement of windows

and heating and air conditioning equipment are not required even if their replacement is needed

to meet the 20 percent reduction standard. Other work that can exempt an apartment owner from

upgrading energy efficiency is work that "requires handling of hazardous materials or extensive

deconstruction."

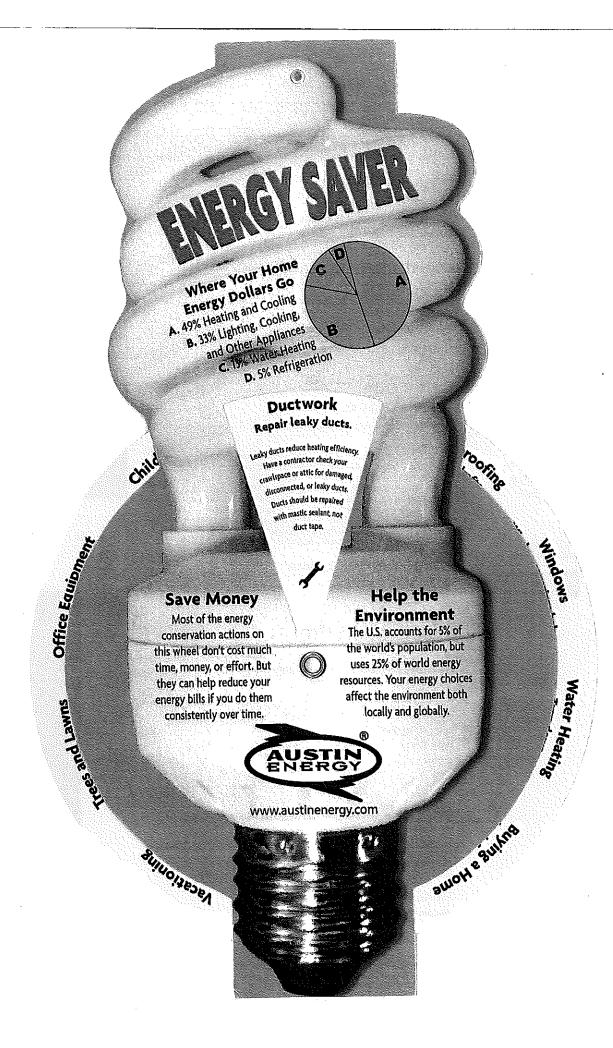
The proposed amendment should not be recommended to City Council for the following reasons:

- According to Austin Energy 49% of all home energy dollars go toward the costs of
 heating and cooling heating. Thus, heating and cooling equipment should not be an
 exemption for apartment complexes. Rather heating and cooling equipment should be
 the primary target of the energy efficiency upgrade.
- The intent of the ordinance is climate protection. The goal is to make buildings more energy efficient and thereby reduce the City of Austin's carbon footprint. The proposed amendment seriously reduces anticipated savings levels and thereby compromises climate protection goals.
- Many renters are low- and moderate income households. These tenants will experience
 unnecessarily high utility bills which will increase their energy burden and further
 contribute to the lack of affordable housing in Austin.
- The amendment was proposed without discussing it and asking for input from parties other than the apartment owners.
- The amendment refers to "deconstruction" which appears to be out of context.

Allowing four percent of apartment complexes to exceed the energy efficiency standard set by the ECAD ordinance defeats its very purpose. It also allows rental properties with the highest utility bills in the city to operate without taking any action to reduce that energy use to acceptable levels. If we want to enhance climate protection in Austin, reduce utility costs for renters and fairly enforce an ordinance adopted almost two years ago the amendments for variances for High Energy Use Facilities and Commercial Buildings should not be recommended to City Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important amendment proposal.

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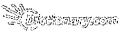
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de-con-struc-tion ⊲)

[dee-kuhn-struhk-shuhn] ? Show IPA

a philosophical and critical movement, starting in the 1960s and especially applied to the study of literature, that questions all traditional assumptions about the ability of language to represent reality and emphasizes that a text has no stable reference or identification because words essentially only refer to other words and therefore a reader must approach a text by eliminating any metaphysical or ethnocentric assumptions through an active role of defining meaning, sometimes by a reliance on new word construction, etymology, puns, and other word play.

Use deconstruction in a Sentence

Origin:

de- + construction

-Related forms

de-con-struc-tion-ist, adjective, noun de-con-struc-tive, adjective

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World English Dictionary

deconstruction (,di:kən'strʌkʃən) [2]

a technique of literary analysis that regards meaning as resulting from the differences between words rather than their reference to the things they stand for. Different meanings are discovered by taking apart the structure of the language used and exposing the assumption that words have a fixed reference point beyond

noisome syncretism passive voice

bombinate



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